"Where there is no vision the people perish"

THE POETRY REVIEW

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EDITED BY JOHN GAWSWORTH, F.R.S.L.

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JOHN GAWSWORTH

OPEN LETTER TO THE READER

May, 1951

Sir, or Madam,

When this number is published I notice it will have been the fourteenth I have had the honour to edit. To save valuable space, and everyone fatigue, I have refrained from any editorial comment in the last ten, believing that their texts would speak for them lyrically enough. But, in view of a continuing desire expressed in letters I have received, perhaps I may once more momentarily re-occupy this position to reiterate our policy as I still see it after these last two-and-a-half years.

In January, 1949, in my first "Open Letter", I wrote of this journal that "it has always stood patient and maternal defending the good child Poetry against all turbulent tantrums of the rampageous young or of the querulous old," that "new poets are as welcome as old poets as long as they write as ably, and even if they write better," and that "the best verse on hand at the time of going to press will always compose the next issue, while I edit."

In other words I then attempted to declare that, appreciating our past, and examining our present, I would aim to build for an all-embracing future. How far I have succeeded is not for me to assess. But I should like to place on record that since I announced such a catholic policy, no serious argument or suggestion has been advanced that this belief in an open mind and free speech, has been detrimental to this journal—once Harold Monro's.

It is invidious at any time to mention names in comparison, so I will thank *en bloc* all those poets, known and less-known, at home and over oceans, who have flocked to enter our Forum. That there was not space to hold them all is obvious. Economics operate generally against goodwill. But that "discoveries" have been made and "new" poets encouraged, acknowledgements to us in many recently-published volumes already testify; and, indeed, the next issue continues our Policy of Encouragement with a further section of selections from submissions of quality lately received from new writers of potentiality.

The Poetry Review retains only one touchstone—excellence. It respects no Person and all persons; and is as easy to enter, therefore, by the righteous as was a certain gate of Damascus for any patient striving camel.

I remain, etc.,

JOHN GAWSWORTH

Poetry

HARD LABOUR

WALTER DE LA MARE

This Prince of Commerce spent his days
In crafty, calm, cold, cozening strife:
He thus amassed a million pounds,
And bought a pennyworth of life.

ICARUS

RACHEL ANNAND TAYLOR

Icarus fell.
In a great soft wrack of golden feather,
Through the crystal, green, and azure weather
Icarus fell.

Nereids
Emerald and ivory enclosed him:
With cool compassionate hands composed him,
Soothed sad lids.

Kind of them!
Because they had no young-gold laurels
They branched his bier with rose-white corals:
Requiem

Sighed and sang.
For the first fair boy whose wings were chidden
In the aery realm by the gods forbidden
Sea-harps rang.

Icarus fell.
In a great soft wrack of golden feather
His dream and he lay dead together.
Icarus fell.

SQUARE SHIPS

LORD DUNSANY

We have done, they said, with the old sharp-pointed boat
That sailed on the seas of Time.
We have done with metre that used to keep it afloat.
We have done with rhyme.

We build them square today, and we have no sail.
Some current may drift us far.
What harm if our timbers leak? We can always bale.
We steer by no star.

For stars are all out of date, as the men they guide;
No use where our young folk fare.
And we go by a newer way on a moonless tide.
And we know not where.

THE UNOPENED DOOR

WILFRID GIBSON

Each day at dawn,
Hearing the fagging feet
Of nightshift men
To neighbouring homes again
Returning down the street—

As they pass by,
To her the still-latched door
Would seem to be
Her grief-locked heart, that he
Will open nevermore.

A GIRL CALLING

ELEANOR FARJEON

Once upon a time
When the snow was falling
A girl went calling, calling
From tree to tree:
"My dove,

Where can he be?
I have lost my soft-winged dove
With eyes of jet
And coral feet,
I have lost my love,
My pet,
My sweet.
Every day
He brought me a gold nut
From the filbert-tree
Of the fairy king,
Every day
Inside the nut was shut
A present for me,
A toy, a ring,
A something, a nothing, an anything.
It kept me glad all day.
But now the ice-cold
Wizard
Who lives in the blizzard
Has driven my dove away,
Driven my dove away.
There will be no gold
Nut
With a secret shut
Inside its shell
Till the snow has lifted its spell,
And my sweet
With the eyes of jet,
My pet
With the coral feet,
My love
With the soft white wing,
My dove
Flies back in the spring."
So through the falling
Snow, the girl went calling,
Calling . . . calling . . .
From tree to tree:
"My love,
My love,
My dove,
Where can he be?"

DEATH OF AN OLD COUNTRYMAN

FRANCES CORNFORD

One more departed soul will now enrich
The lichened barn, and hazel hedge, and ditch,
The rounded ricks and daily sky above
With never-spoken, long-acquainted love.

UNCLE GEORGE

E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN

In the tense solitude of August nights,
When leafage intercepts the heavenly lights,
My mind revisits one who taught its youth
That, after Nature, books come nearest Truth,
A wrinkled lawyer with a sandy wig,
Whose crowded shelves made his small room seem big.
Upon his claret-pentacled hearth-mat
Rather than purred snored a sleek ginger cat,
Thomas, a fatted chattel of the law,
Most economical of voice and paw,
Whose solitary gesture seemed to be
Preening a whisker most sagaciously.
Upon the mantelpiece a box of spills,
And pewter standish carrying some few quills.
A tin box took the centre table's sun,
Containing, he would say, work not yet done;
And while that table's foot, with claw and ball,
Tickled my stocking, gravely from the hall
Below came warning from the cuckoo-clock
That I must now rejoin the social flock,
Chattering with the racket of a forge,
While I sat read to by my Uncle George.

LARGESS FOR ALL

THOMAS MOULT

And so the day came up, slow-coloured, quietly rich,
Giving largess for all, spread by the season's rote.

First, a low cloud was lit; next, the far hills afloat
Above sunk mists like heavy cloud; a thrush's throat;
Then, by a window's way, a dreaming maiden's bed;
And last, across the summer valley, softly shed
To where a drunken lout sprawled sleeping in a ditch.

And neither lightening hills, nor meadow dewy-spun,
Receives more lavish share of the sun's eastern rose;
Nor ev'n the dream that's essenced of stainless snows!
Yonder, the bird that since the dawn has flung
Warm bubbling love-notes to the maid, among
The window-mirrored leaves, had sweetlier never sung
Than now above the sodden wretch who slumbers on.

SAINT JOAN*

JOHN METCALFE

I heard a sound in the wind, mother,
Getting at me again,
And heard something go by
Like a sort of rude whispering sigh
In the silly rain.
All very well to say 'Katie, listen,
It's just your head-noises'.
I promised I'd try
Not to hear. But near that old Nissen
Hut where I heard them first
As I played with the boys
I *saw* a man
Just like the sound he had made,
All baker-white and sly.
Granted, I ran.
Yet I belong to Them now,
And you can fry
Before I give up my voices
For you or father.
I'd rather
Die . . .

*With acknowledgements to *The Saturday Review of Literature* (N.Y.).—Ed.

OBITUARY COLUMN

GILBERT THOMAS

So Smith and Jenkins both died yesterday!
I knew them well. Neat irony is here!
With what contrasted nuance and display
Their notices together now appear!

I can but smile to see them thus assessed.
Injustice? No! Each worked for his own wage.
Ultimate vision was for one the test:
The other kept an eye upon *The Age!*

THE CHEQUE

RICHARD CHURCH

Here is the cheque, re-opened if you please,
Because the merchandise it represents,
Though legal has no trace of innocence.
Cashed where you will, it bears our villanies
Through its dispersal, multiplied in size,
At least to us who wait upon events.
Profit or loss, our mutual recompense
Has forced my signature. We know it lies.

But even so, the Bank will honour it;
For having is not virtue. I've enough
To counterfeit the wealth for which we swept
Hell's floor. Ours is another deficit,
And there this cheque is false. Behind its bluff,
We shall remember how a woman wept.

THE EDELWEISS

L. A. G. STRONG

Love, I will take your pain
Into my heart,
Uncover, tear apart
The new-healed flesh, and make it bleed again.

And I will say it is
Redeeming blood,
Bid the wound-edges bud
Into a flower of the precipice,

An edelweiss
Blown between world and world,
Its petals splashed and pearled
With drops of passionate blood, with tears of ice:

Since red and white,
Stillness and heartbeat, ice
And torturer's flame, desire and sacrifice
Bloom on that cliff-ledge, balanced, composite.

It may be so,
For often what I sigh
Between your lips as our last minutes fly
Is truer than I know.

But what stays firm
Though minutes fly, though heart
Sigh truth? What faith, what chiselled vow, what art
Outwit the worm?

One stone of trust,
One obelisk will stay.
Each captive night, each wry defenceless day
I love you as I must.

My stair to heaven, my rope
That blinds me to the stair;
My pastime and my prayer,
Sentence of death, certificate of hope;

Each paradox shall raise
Music for searching hand
And heart that dare withstand
Its cliff-ledge counterpoise, its petalled blaze.

Blossom and faith and vow
And hope are brought to bed
Not there, my love, not after we are dead,
But here and now.

Therefore, to read the sky's
Forehead and fathom love,
I may not look above
My pattern here, your hands, your lips, your eyes.

THE ERRING GARDENER

ADELAIDE EDEN PHILLPOTTS

Brooding in tramelled citadel,
Beneath the grating of his cell
In sunlit corner of the yard
Upthrusting through the concrete hard,
Where errant wind or bird a seed
Had dropped, he marked it spread—a weed
He used to grapple with and fight,
But now the sole green thing in sight;
And ardently he grew to care,
Beyond all sense, that it lived there;
Until he came to love the thing
He used to loathe, uproot and fling
On compost heap or burn—a plant
Coarse, stingful and recalcitrant—
But here the only plant unfurled
Upon a barren, plantless world.
And thus in prison, stony, drear,
That weed to his starved soul grew dear.
He watched its growth with hungry eyes,
Until one noon at exercise
A fellow victim kicked aside
And trampled on the nettle, till it died.

THE OTHER

RUTH PITTER

Like a bird in the rainy cover
When song has fallen still,
It dwells apart, and over
Blue hill upon blue hill:

As a bird in the green places,
When summer days are long,
Falls weary, and embraces
Silence instead of song;

Far and apart it muses
In the obscure and dim,

Forgetting the sweet uses
Of voice and feather and limb.

Small, small and slender,
Crowned with its faint gold crown,
It dwells where the light is tender,
Like fair hair falling down.

Swiftness and song were moulded
Into that wing, that breast;
But the bright wing is folded,
The throbbing throat at rest.

When from that bosom narrow
The fiery singing flew,
Like a sharp secret arrow
It pierced my armour through;

But its great silence haunts me
In the solemn summer gloom;
The voiceless thing enchants me
As with a sense of doom.

A monument, a token
Of all we have betrayed;
Of all the brightness broken—
It makes my soul afraid.

Far from the tumult fleeing,
Where we ourselves destroy,
Is it my own grieved being,
Mourning its unborn joy,

Or some indignant spirit,
Whose power can afford
To give us what we merit—
A silence like a sword?

FOR US, THE LOST

P. D. CUMMINS

For us, the lost, no shelter will avail,
There is no safety left where we may cower;
The present shell caves in, the winds assail
The wretched structure of its leaning tower.

We must accept our sequent wounds. What use
To flinch before the sensed, the certain edge,
To spread in sicklied folds the flag of truce,
Beg from the traitor past one sign, one pledge?
See, even now the viaduct of night
Weakens beneath the adversary's heel,
And in the future's armoury, the light
Glints on innumerable hilts of steel.
For us, the lost, who sowed the dragon's teeth,
To-morrow is the dagger in the sheath.

EPITAPH

STANLEY SNAITH

O may this Christmas-flowering rose
Stand as Spring's outpost in the snows
And vindicate her faithless head
Who broke the vows of love to don
Her marriage robe of stone,
And took the April earth to bed.

NEVER MIND

NORMAN CAMERON

Never mind if you have fallen into slavery to booze:
There's a novel Danish treatment that will cure you while you snooze.
Never mind if you're a selfish bore whom normal men avoid:
You'll get worshipful attention from some follower of Freud.
If your wife has run away because you make her want to retch,
Never mind, for there are plenty of good pebbles on the beach.
And if your body buckles up beneath its load of vice,
Never mind about the funeral: the State will pay the price.

THE MORTAL IMMORTAL

VERNON WATKINS

Dawn, O virgin gold,
Vision of sacred mould,

Faith's fire of windows gone
To feed that unicorn
Captured in the field:
First love that fills men's eyes, so that their lips are sealed:

Straightway from the stars,
Night's wisdom-teeming vase
Upheld by downcast eyes,
Shape of the fallen skies,
Girl redeeming space,
Printing on absent air the God-encountered face:

Image of God's laws,
Rock to the eagle's claws,
Setting those wings to beat,
Proportioned hands and feet,
Bring love to the loins;
Bind that great glory down, then stamp it on the coins.

POEM: 1950

ALAN ROOK

From Cornwall to the Hebrides,
In Stalingrad and Xanadu,
Across this waiting planet lies
The temperate caress of snow.

The unloved count the stars again
Where our quick hysteria sleeps:
Symbolic on his ice-hung vane
The nervous cock his exile keeps.

Nightlong from Russia through the wood
The wind relates the eternal hours
And lends our restless, fevered blood
These blind, imaginary powers.

The craft and love of maker man
Invade the stage, oppress the mind,
Where five or fifty æons mean
No more than notches on the wind.

Yet still each human victim must
Meddle, submit to augeries;
Each instinct with ancestral dust
Assert some other truth than this.

STATUE

(BUDAPEST)

HERBERT CORBY

Like candles snuffed by gods the columns stand,
Broken and pallid, mourning of Rome and Greece:
The kingly statues, sword and shield in hand
Need not such armour, sheltered by death and fame.
This park was planned for royalty and swans:
But this beheaded statue stands like shame:
What manner of hate had heroes such as these
Who kill a king when he is only bronze?

WORDS FOR MUSIC

PATRIC DICKINSON

Then pick this rose,
The throbbing rose,
Under my ribs
That grows:

Regard the thorn,
The mortal thorn,
That drew blood
When I was born

And put it to your lips,
Beloved lips,
The world lies
Cancelled in eclipse:

O then draw breath
And breath and breath,
The sweet smell
Is death.

BOY WITH A MOUTH-ORGAN

JAMES KIRKUP

Lips hardened by winter's dumb duress
Part on this other, broader smile of youth
That masks deep shyness in its shallow kiss,
While silently behind its music laughs the mouth
Of Pan, and mourns the skull of a severer myth.

The keen and thick-fringed eyes denote
Languor, delight, astonishment or grief,
Interpretors expressive of the heart
That makes the lake dance, and the leaf.

Boy, in cupped hands hold whatever passion time invents:
Fire your tiny forges with gigantic sound, and fill
Heaven with your fierce harmonics! Inspire those instruments,
Aeolus, lyre and grove-hung harp, that now miraculously thrill
Our childhood, the toy that trembles to an ancient will!

ODYSSEUS' LAST VOYAGE

ERIK DE MAUNY

This night was crossed with blood
As if forgotten fevers resurrected
Their magic-lantern histories of death:
An old man waking in a chilly dawn
I feel a premonition of remorse
Rise like a mist upon the waking earth.

And yet the sun, bright dipper of the seasons
Spills his bronze milk upon my path
Bathing the patient questions of my feet:
The map's unknown with siren voice invites
Between the light and leaves, until I see
The spattered blood of poppies in the wheat.

I sought the early landmarks of my love
Whose constancy once bore me in its shell
Fragile unscathed through every perilous reef,
A precious flaw in time whose diamond rage
Struck the glass folly of the impious brave
Who sleep unceasing tributaries of grief.

But I endured! Even beyond the rocks
In summer meadows' aphrodysiac scents
I shielded unappeased my constant fire,
Along the archipelagos of delight
Where each sense swoons for love, moving alone,
Among the shining dancers of desire.

I moved alone in pride, in silent anguish,
Naked upon the lances of the sea
And *her* face only at my journey's end:
Calypso, Circe, these were shadows only,
The slim-limbed charmer passion's counterfeit
Whose silky fingers summoned up no heat.

Home was my hunger, and on freezing seas
I dreamed how summer prickles and sings hotly,
And drowsy voices murmur under the limes,
Or black-fanged winter finds us by the fire:
But Tiresias' voice was ever at my ear
Warning of violence and this last lone voyage.

So there was never an end: for still my fame
Lay snares before me; and that myth I made
The one sure bulwark in a ravenous sea
Of time, was stronger than the blood and lust,
But with a cunning cage of barbs and spikes
Locked me in my own sad-eyed effigy.

So I became a hostage to my deeds,
Churchwarden of infernal parishes,
And all my victories broke out like sores:
This is the ghost the histories will not mention
The dead that found no peace, the living dead,
Whose anguish forged the arms of future wars.

Whose blood then crossed my sleep
This night, as I lay by my fateful burden
Symbol of voyages ever recommenced?
For I have passed from history, no one knows
What happened next: or whether I met the stranger
Whose question tamed the hunger in my eyes.

TIDINGS

ARTHUR CADDICK

She would whisper frenziedly,
Knocking in haste the earthen jar
To spill cool water in the heavy Persian night,
That Salamis was lost and the mad tyrant
Had lashed the sea in spite.

She would find him in a gaming-den,
Stupid with Falernian,
And pull him from the dice,
And say and say and say again
That only between Attila and the Gate
Was panic, treason, and a falling state.

In some salon's elegance of silk
She would write the quick dramatic note,
Pressed by a flunkey in her lover's hand,
While he was selling France for contraband,
And it would read the Emperor had fled.

And he, satrap, patrician, financier,
Eternally would disbelieve
Caressing voice ill-tuned to menace,
Mistress writing scented ruin,
And would, at last, reluctant, leave
Pavilion, gaming-den, banking-room,
To find the truth about it all.

Then face her, clamorous with the fact,
No woman's rumour borne on whispers now,
That Xerxes sailed in vanity to fall,
That Rome was holocaust and sacked,
That Bonaparte had warred himself to doom.

WALTER DE LA MARE

BY CLIVE SANSOM

In thinking of Walter de la Mare the first thing we remember is always his quality of dream. There is about his work an atmosphere—not so much of sleep, as of half-sleep—a twilight that exists between sundown and night, between dawn and day.

"Escapism" some have called it; but is that true? Is it not rather, as he says in the poem "Dreams":

> Two worlds have we: without; within.

There is the external daylight world of fact and time, which can be seen, touched, heard, measured and analysed. And there is an inner world apprehendable by some faculty other than the senses or the reason—Blake's "eternal world of which this vegetable universe is but a faint shadow." Civilisation today recognises the first, but our surface consciousness has become too active for us to see the glimmering world beneath. We call the man who accepts the outer world a realist; the man who accepts the inner world an escapist. Yet is not the realist himself an escapist, always trying to elude the other life which, however he may deny it, still exists within?

Walter de la Mare denies neither world. Occupying a midway region, he shows us—usually by implication, for he seldom moralises—that the two may be reconciled. We are citizens of both worlds, he says in effect, if only we will claim our rights. It is possible to believe in the heart and spirit without mortifying the flesh or abusing the conscious mind. It is possible to experience all the pain, beauty, transcience of ordinary existence while holding the truth of another timeless life. In fact it is only as we observe the outer world with eyes that have looked on the inner, and judge the temporal by the values of the eternal, that we can see it in true perspective.

> Two worlds have we: without; within;
> But all that sense can mete and span,
> Until it confirmation win
> From heart and soul, is death to man.

These lines summarise the times we live in. Our criteria today are fear, reason, money, power, speed, expedience. We cannot wait for the confirmation of heart and soul. The solution offered to this problem by de la Mare—again by implication—is that only in childhood and in dream does modern civilisation provide a meeting-ground for heart and head. To hold both worlds in balance, we have to recapture the imagination of the dreamer and the alertness of the child. We must dream; but dream, as a child does, with eyes wide open.

That is what de la Mare himself has done. No one writing today has a keener, shrewder eye for the natural world. But with him, as with a child, its familiarity has never bred contempt. The world is Eden-new. Everything in it retains its freshness and wonder. A comet flaming across the night is marvellous,

> Yet what is common as lovely may be:
> The petalled daisy, a honey bell,
> A pebble, a branch of moss, a gem
> Of dew, or fallen rain—if we
> A moment in their beauty dwell;
> Entranced, alone, see only them.

And knowing another world where space does not exist, the poet is not deceived by illusions of size. In imagination's eye, the largest object and the smallest—Leviathan and the honey-fly—are of equal worth. Not only the hills are beautiful but

> The speck of stone
> Which the wayfaring ant
> Stirs—and hastes on.

Somehow that word "wayfaring" endows the ant's movements with value and purpose.

It is this microscopic adjustment of vision which gives his verse on animals and insects its peculiar tenderness. With a fly, we see

> A rosebud like a feather bed,
> Its prickle like a spear.

With the rabbit we hear the

> . . . *stamp, stamp, stamp*
> Through dim labyrinths clear—
> The whole world darkened:
> A Human near!

And a mother-mouse, crouching in her nest "with tiny eye in fear upcast" as the owl flies over, takes on for a moment the significance of a human mother in an air-raid shelter.

De la Mare has sometimes been criticised for never attempting some great work like a play or an epic. We might as well complain of Chopin for not composing a symphony. In the world of art, as in the world of nature, size is less important than quality. And it is this poet's extraordinary power of seeing the universal in the particular, and expressing it in so perfect a form, that has given his work its greatness. It has its limitations, which he has recognised. But within those limits how incomparable!

No poet since Campion has been so exquisite a craftsman. None has possessed a surer ear for rhythm, or blended so subtly with speech the phrasing and cadences of music. In technique, as in wisdom, he has much

to teach us—especially those who write or read words with only the prosaic, logical, scientific stratum of the brain:

O Poesy, of wellspring clear,
Let no sad Science thee suborn,
Who art thyself its planisphere!
All knowledge is foredoomed, forlorn—
Of inmost truth and wisdom shorn—
Unless imagination brings
Its skies wherein to use its wings.

Two worlds have we: without; within;
But all that sense can mete and span,
Until it confirmation win
From heart and soul, is death to man.
Of grace divine his life began;
And—Eden empty proved—in deep
Communion with his spirit in sleep

The Lord Jehovah of a dream
Bade him, past all desire, conceive
What should his solitude redeem:
And, to his sunlit eyes, brought Eve.
Would that my day-wide mind could weave
Faint concept of the scene from whence
She awoke to Eden's innocence!

Starven with cares, like tares in wheat
Wildered with knowledge, chilled with doubt,
The timeless self in vain must beat
Against its walls to hasten out
Whither the living waters fount;
And—evil and good no more at strife—
Seek love beneath the tree of life.

When then in memory I look back
To childhood's visioned hours I see
What now my anxious soul doth lack
Is energy in peace to be
At one with nature's mystery:
And Conscience less my mind indicts
For idle days than dreamless nights. (1)

(1) From *Collected Poems*, (Faber & Faber), with the author's permission.

THE WASTELAND ERA*

RANDALL SWINGLER

The era of the spiritual wasteland as an undertone of English literature, to which T. S. Eliot gave a legend and a signature, is generally considered to denote the decade from 1920 to 1930, and to characterise the psychological disillusion and despair which followed the first World War. But in fact that disease of the spirit reaches far deeper into the national consciousness and history than the temporary reaction of sensitive individuals to the frightful experiences of twentieth-century warfare. The premonition of a civilization running down, of a nation exhausting itself into sterility, overshadows much of the poetry of the latter part of the nineteenth century. James Thomson's *City of Dreadful Night* and Fitzgerald's English version of *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* both reflected in different facets the beginning of the break-up of the solid Victorian façade of morality and belief, before the onslaught of science and the hell-for-leather competition between the great industrial powers for domination of world markets. Matthew Arnold's feeling of suspension between two worlds, "one dead, the other powerless to be born," is still being echoed fifty years later by Cecil Day Lewis—"Only ghosts can live between two fires."

This poetic despair and disgust arose as much from a hatred and horror of the tasteless materialism of inflated industrial civilization as from the increasing isolation of the poet himself. His intellectual solitude, his sense of standing alone against the fraudulent and destructive values of a society geared to the mere acquisition of wealth, drove the poet back into the past, to the search for a more stable tradition, and the assertion of a purely aesthetic way of life.

Already before 1914 those writers who were not floating upon the Indian summer lakes of the brief Edwardian prosperity were beginning to hear in the secret treaties of the Great Powers and the widespread popular unrest all over Europe rumours of war and catastrophe. In 1912, W. B. Yeats, emerging with a new, ascetic, and terrible grandeur from the faery shades of peasant Ireland, was writing:

> "These are the clouds about the fallen sun,
> The majesty that shuts his burning eye:
> The weak lay hand on what the strong has done,
> Till that be tumbled that was lifted high
> And discord follow upon unison,
> And all things at one common level lie."

Perhaps it is not surprising that the voice of pessimism should speak with its driest and bitterest accent from America. On the one hand, her cultural ties, since the days of the French Revolution, had always been

*From a Broadcast on the Far Eastern Service of the B.B.C.

closer with France than with England, and in consequence her young writers fell more directly under the influence of Beaudelaire and the French "flayers of the bourgeoisie"; and on the other, the unprecedented rate of development of American industry, the unchecked exploitation of its natural resources, the fantastic accumulation of individual wealth, exaggerated the vulgarity and inhumanity of its social standards. Young American poets and artists fled to Europe, to seek refuge in its older and more refined cultural tradition, only to discover the same economic mechanical pattern destroying and disintegrating that tradition.

> "There died a myriad,
> And of the best, among them,
> For an old bitch gone in the teeth,
> For a botched civilization . . ."

So Ezra Pound, the ex-patriate American, summed up a conviction which many already held before the war began. And so also Eliot, who had come back from the New England to the old, expressed a disillusion, a conviction of the utter decay and sterility of society, which had not been forced upon him by the shock of war-experience, but which the material and psychological devastation of the war had only served to confirm.

England emerged from the first World War impoverished and without a plan, but unwilling to admit it. She had lost her supremacy in shipping and steel: the change-over from war-time to peace-time production proceeded chaotically. Millions of men were demobilised into collapsing industries and unemployment. And there seemed to be no clear voice to sound a note of regeneration. Noisy and cynical flouting of all the old disciplines, the established code of morality, the traditional beliefs, and the hectic pursuit of ephemeral pleasures was the order of the day for those who could afford it. And for the rest, sinister and bewildered explosions of protest against the intolerable negation of their lives.

This situation Eliot, in the poem which has become the title-motif of the period, interpreted in terms of the medieval myth of the Fisher-King, the head and fountain of social vitality, who has gone sterile through an ancestral curse, and thereby induced impotence and sterility, not only in the community which he dominates, but even in the land itself upon which the community depends for its sustinence. By a subtle and erudite interplay of echoes and evocations from the culture of the past with colloquial modern instances, the poet conveys an almost nauseating impression of the gradual devaluation of all values, of the widening chasm between belief and action, thought and behaviour. In his world men have forgotten why they are alive, to what end they perform their mechanical actions. Eliot looks out upon a world of puppets—

> "We are the hollow men
> We are the stuffed men

leaning together
Headpiece filled with straw . . ."

who have lost all internal volition, and are completely at the mercy of external stimulus.

"The world," said D. H. Lawrence at this time, "is waiting for a great wave of regeneration, or a great wave of death." Eliot was sure it was the latter. The Waste Land, in his poem, waited for water; but water has the double power of life and death, to rejuvenate the roots, or to drown. So that "What the Thunder Said" in the finale of his poem, is not only a promise of spiritual resurrection, the falling of the rain upon the land, but also the destruction of modern civilization as we know it—

Falling towers
Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
Vienna London
Unreal

Civilization has reached the end of a cycle, must pass through a time of death before it is reborn into a new cycle; meanwhile, the only advice that Eliot can give to individuals is to "redeem the time" in spiritual contemplation.

A parallel picture in prose was being painted by Aldous Huxley in his early novels, *These Barren Leaves, Antic Hay,* and *Point Counter Point.*

Meanwhile, over the face of England, the spiritual Waste Land had become a concrete actuality. Vast industrial areas, like the shipbuilding town of Jarrow and the Cumberland mining towns, lay derelict and dead. The new generation of young poets, led by W. H. Auden, brought up in a landscape of—

"Smokeless chimneys, damaged bridges, rotting wharves and choked canals,
Tramlines buckled, smashed trucks lying on their side across the rails;
Power-stations locked, deserted, since they drew the boiler fires;
Pylons fallen or subsiding, trailing dead high-tension wires—"

began to look for social regeneration not so much in their inner spiritual selves or in some cyclic renewal of fertility, as in combined social action, and the setting of the domestic scene in order.

Whatever the validity of their theories or their poetic practice, there is no doubt that the year 1930 does mark the end of a literary period in England, and the beginning of a new conception of the world in which literature is produced and of the function of literature in that world. Rain had come to the Waste Land, destructive of much in reverence for the past and appreciation for the abiding values of the present, but at least impulsive in a new direction.

"Stirring dull roots with spring rain."

THE HAUNTED ROSE-GARDEN OF WILLIAM KEAN SEYMOUR

By JOHN WALLER

Those who seek the startling or sensational in poetry will not immediately be aroused by that of William Kean Seymour; for he is a quiet poet who does not delve far beyond his own experience which has been a calm one. He enjoys nature and beauty, but without waxing over emotional about them. A banker by profession he writes in a disciplined way, though the discipline is not too rigid. As he tells us in *Weeding:*

> "And you, my wild thoughts, you too must go.
> You are irredeemably primitive,
> Secret and urgent and strong,
>
> But you are out of place in a cultivated mind . . . "

Nevertheless he does not dismiss these "pines and wild thoughts" irrevocably, though they will never secure the place in his mind or garden of cultivated flowers like roses; these are always—he tells us in another poem—on his office table, beside the inkwells, the pin cushion and the pens . . .

"Georgian" is the adjective that immediately springs to mind, but it would be unfair to apply it to Kean Seymour in any derogative sense; for his poetry is largely free of the Georgians' more florid vices, just as it enjoys in a full measure one of their major virtues, a controlled sensitivity. Added to which is a calm sense of humour and an honesty and modesty about himself, which is refreshing to find. Perhaps in the Nineties, among such compeers as Arthur Symons, Ernest Dowson, and Lionel Johnson, Kean Seymour might have found a truer home, perhaps also a more congenial one.

For, while the best poems of Kean Seymour are concerned with outside life or scenery, it is not so much nature that interests him as gardens and other artificial pleasaunces created by man. He prefers woods to forests, streams to rivers, flower-beds to the countryside; and when he explores it is to Kew Gardens or along the hedges of a Kentish Lane. Nature in the wild and rough he shudders at or ignores. (And I do not blame him for that, for I find the great Nature poets—*pace* Wordsworth—peculiarly boring). Kean Seymour seeks moments of peace and calm from which he can make brilliant miniatures. He will write about an Estuary when it is "tranquil as massèd opals", about trees when they make "a cool world of leaves and wings", or about flowers when they are tidy—carnations plucked with their "dusk hearts" fallen asleep or purple irises who resemble:

"Delicate dames with their attendant squires—
Green-garbed and slim . . . "

Even Death is neutralized by this poet into something that happens gracefully and in perfect taste among flowers. You see it perhaps as a dead garden, a garden abandoned but haunted by some gracious shadows and now left to decay. Or as he says of *Roses:*

"Terribly the proud sun burns
The young loveliness that turns
Joyously to whence it came . . .
There's a splendour, there's an end."

There is too a peculiar delicacy of touch in the poem *Ghost in Garden* which must surely put Kean Seymour among the foremost of those poets who have written in this deft and haunted style, sailed so calmly through our turbulent age, and pinned down the lost wonderful memories in a masterpiece of haunted colour.

"This way, blanched phlox, this way, dim mignonette,
She trod this path,—do you so soon forget
How in a charmed obeisance your frail heads
Bent in the air where still her phantom treads?
Roses moon-pale, how scarlet-proud you were
When the wind rustled in the sighing fir
And swayed the tall snapdragons in the sun.
If she is dead, think you her soul has gone?
Here she will walk while hands still tend your lives,
And here when nothing of your scent survives,
In sun and starlight, when the winds are free
And in the stillness everlastingly.
Roses may waste in riot of wild weed
And nettles to sweet lavender succeed,
But no weeds thwart that ghost which evermore
Returns to find what she found here before."

Similarly, in a portrayal of winter, the dead season, Kean Seymour paints in *Frost Music* a picture of a thousand phantom birds preening ghostly wings among the dead leaves. The delicate memory always attaches for him to the delicate place.

Clearly Kean Seymour is most at home as a poet in this haunted rose garden, but that is not to say that he cannot also at times succeed in a way beyond it. *Cæsar Remembers* paints a firm picture of "that proud man" looking out over the Chilterns though it is true that he recalls in the shadows a Roman garden. There is a strong note of anguish in *Ambush* beginning:

"Wild one, wild one, fleeing through the woods,
Your skin is rent with thorns, dark fear is in your eyes."

And *Sràmozan* makes an effective ballet in which the slave girl is beheaded in order to accompany her dying lord on his way to the unknown. All these, together with such poems as *Nereid, Dark Beauty, Siesta* and *Mist over Hindhead* prove in their various ways that the poet can add something to his rose garden without detracting from its haunted qualities. Also, a representative from his sonnets, *The Undying Hour,* deserves to be quoted for the firmness with which he handles his theme, though here again the family likeness to the philosophy of the garden poems must be remarked upon.

It is astonishing, perhaps, that Kean Seymour has not touched more in his poetry upon real life and existence, for when he does do this he writes with a firm hand and successfully, avoiding the sentimentality into which one might expect a garden poet to fall. *The Heroes* for instance, though a flag-waving poem, is astonishingly vivid as a commemoration of the deaths of Captain Scott and his companions in the polar ice. *In the Train* contains a remarkably grim and true to life description of the shooting of the Irish patriot Plunkett as described by a common soldier who was one of the firing squad. *To One who eats Larks* has a quiet whimsical humour of address that becomes more boisterous in *James K. Jallofat. Viscount Demos* too, has sharp, sudden satire.

But, above all, poems like *Pandar* (based on the fourth act of *Pericles*) and *Inconstancy* show what Kean Seymour might have achieved had he ever left the rose garden for the jungle that is human life. As it is, he is left to comment "Love's a mad devil loosed from hell" without showing in his work that he has ever experienced any of the more devilish qualities, just as in the former poem he can superbly but with a dry sinister relish relate the varying lives and careers of fallen women in sharp musical verses.

It is, however, infrequent that William Kean Seymour leaves his garden in this way and even when he does one can imagine the scent of flowers about him, a rose in his buttonhole, or at any rate a dreamy look reflecting quiet scenery in his eyes. It is too late now for him to leave: like his own sleeping child statue sighing for comrades left behind in Faery he is bound there. He will never like his Proust "seduce us in the night"; but he does not belong to our time at all. He does not even, as I have hinted, belong to the Georgians but to the Nineties when the private gardens of the mind and life still existed in all their unfolding luxuriance. On a calm evening you should read him, for he will recall these dead and lamented times most splendidly. A bomb may explode like a rose, but for many the real rose will remain the more wonderful.

TWO TRADITIONALISTS

This Insubstantial Pageant. Monk Gibbon, Phoenix House (10s. 6d.).
Collected Poems. Stella Gibbons, Longmans, Green & Co. (10s. 6d.).

REVIEWED BY P. D. CUMMINS

Not long ago, an American poet who has on several occasions appeared in print, sent me four of his new works, one of which called *Love in a Mirror* begins:

"You are an orange, and
Only the sharp loveknife
Can free your juices.
(In the mirror are painted

Profundities; your face
Does not smile in image.)
Your belly is ripe, like
An old violin—therein sleep

Concerti for which there are
No recordings.
(In the mirror a naked id
Dances to distant music.) . . . etc., etc.

Now since it is as useless to preach to the unconverted as to the converted, I shall only state that if naked ids arouse a passionate response in you; if you thrill to, say, a colon placed between each word of a poem; or if you hold that a creative artist should hurtle madly forth in search of new art forms, then the work of Monk Gibbon will be as nothing to you. If, however, you believe that spontaneity is the essence of poetry and that a strong and shapely framework is absolutely requisite for the transmission of a thought, then this poet will shine out for you like a fixed star in a sky murky with pseudo-intellectualism and even more synthetic *angst*. Neither Monk Gibbon nor, for that matter Stella Gibbons whose work I shall consider later, has fallen into the common error of attempting to be more than themselves; the consequence is that, for those who have ears to hear, they have far more than themselves to give.

Mount Ida was a prose autobiography which only a poet could have written. *This Insubstantial Pageant* is yet one more proof of what a very good poet we have in Monk Gibbon. Broadcasting about this collection, Austin Clarke said: "We never feel that the words come between Mr. Gibbon and his thought", and this, it seems to me, is the highest praise that can be given to any poet, since, surely, the measure of his greatness lies in his ability to express his personal and spiritual vision in such a way as to touch the common chord. Briefly, the poet must be *accessible;*

that is to say, he must share his creative instinct—and this is precisely what Mr. Gibbon does. He is a crystalline writer, subtle, yes, but never obscure; a craftsman whose craft seems effortless (which it certainly is not); a tradionalist whose traditionalism is exciting because it continually yields fresh and unexpected springs of beauty. He excels in that straitest of all forms, the sonnet, as, for instance, in *Half Psalmist's Limit* with its echo of Gerard Manley Hopkins in the sestet, and in *The Recompence:*

"Have nothing, then, have nothing, yet have all;
Give back blind greed, deaf pride, dumb aching gain:
Carcase of hope give back with no more brawl,
Blind and mained selfhood, give this back again.
All in the one scale throwing, how light it swings
That once seemed heavy—heavy weighed as lead.
Heart's bondage less her highest need, heart's wings,
Stones that were stones indeed and not soul's bread.

Receiving what? O what receive indeed?
What in exchange lain hid what field below?
Whence food to satisfy so hungry need,
Whence clothing—of such rags gone naked—now?
This field. This food. Clay-healèd eye, late blind,
And listening ear, and wakened, welcoming mind."

Here, as, indeed in all of Mr. Gibbon's work, strength is most happily married to simplicity.

It is, however, the prose-poem which Monk Gibbon has made particularly his own, a form which in less sure hands might so easily have become pretentious and self-conscious, but which in his is of a classic purity. Consider these two:

We Whom that Sea Called

"We whom that sea called, and who have drawn its waters, we whom day saw a great way from the land and whom night found still drifting, coming again empty-handed, or almost so, remind you that one can remain a great time there and yet bring little. For, though there is no limit to the sea, beauty is not easily taken. Besides our nets are broken."

and:

Of Other Poets

"Though they found many words to write of one thing or another, and though they called heaven to witness that their love was made safe against all days to come, and would not likely perish, Time, that is very zealous searching all things out to destroy them, found their songs and made them silent; nor was their promise heard, nor the things they had thought made safe remembered.

"But I have spoken of my love for you hardly at all, and I have made

my songs out of a few words, that Time perhaps in passing might not notice them."

It is impossible, I think, to read these without being moved by their delicacy and restraint. I wish I had space to quote more; I can only hope I have said enough to cause readers to buy *This Insubstantial Pageant* for themselves, a collection which contains well over two hundred poems, not one of which fails. Why? Because Monk Gibbon is supremely fastidious, because these poems were written only because they *had* to be written, not for any other motive whatsoever. Integrity is the keynote of the true poet.

Work by Miss Stella Gibbons has already appeared in *The Poetry Review,* if not so frequently as that of Mr. Monk Gibbon. Her *Collected Poems* are marked by a sensuous appreciation of beauty and the unforced lyricism of a natural singer. Moreover, this book contains two outstanding satirical poems (as is only to be expected, since it was Stella Gibbons who laid low for ever the Sussex-earthy novel with one masterly sweep of the pen.) On no account miss *Mrs. Fand smells the hydrangeas* and *A Fat Woman in Bond Street* which begins:

> Man died for this,
> Christ died that these
> Mottled and inward-turning knees
> Might swell the web of Milanese.
> Your swollen, gargoyle face to make
> Satan coiled in an emerald brake,
> And tempted Eve; and now his skin
> Makes shoes to cram your hoofs within . . .
>
> What shall I buy?
> The world was made
> That you might hang your purple skin
> With amber and clear jade.
> The earth is yours. Young sperm-whales died
> For bones to clamp your putty side;
> Beasts of great strength and savage line
> Died in their shame to make you fine.
>
> Waddle complacently in the sun . . .

It is a thousand pities that Miss Gibbons who can write with such passionate intensity as this should have weakened and diluted many of her verses by using "thou" and "thee", for example, and that she should have included many poems which are frankly unworthy of her. I plead with her to bear in mind what has befallen Tennyson in our own generation through the dangerous error of unselectiveness, and to weed her garden rigorously; half-a-dozen tares may quite fatally obscure row upon row of golden wheat.

SHORT REVIEWS

Inward Companion and other poems by Walter de la Mare (Faber, 8s. 6d.)

Walter de la Mare's many admirers need not fear that time has lowered the standard of his work. Mr. de la Mare is still our greatest living lyrical poet and he shows no sign of relinquishing that position.

It can perhaps be claimed that his poetry no longer always shows the complete simplicity and pure lyricism that marked his earlier work, and while it is true that he is now in manner slightly more "difficult" than before, such occasional sacrifice of some naivety in phrase is adequately compensated for by a deeper content.

I must admit that when reading *Inward Companion* I once or twice found myself wishing I could turn a page and come upon a poem that came nearer to the mood of such immortalities as *Nod, Silver, Dreams,* and, particularly, *Farewell.* De la Mare has not looked his last on all things lovely by any means, but his regard sometimes has more of the quasi-comic element, a little of the "shall we share a joke" appeal; in every way forgivable, but not the medium for his greatest feelings. He delights us most when there is no suggested personal relationship with his reader, and when he is concerned more with a mood than with a tale. One does not resent the gentle moralities that creep in—how could we when they are couched so delicately, almost so apologetically, and are so worth saying—but such a poem as *A Snowdrop* makes one feel that this is more what we have expected and what we will always love.

And there are others in this collection about which one feels just as happy—*The Rose, Occluded, The Tower, Slim Cunning Hands, An Angel,* to mention but a few. Not all are recent, and a fair number have been published in periodicals; this explains their diversity of mood and matter.

In a recent review I regretted the unadulterated adulation of Mr. de la Mare by one of his author admirers, but it is easy to appreciate how impossible it is for true poetry-lovers not to respond with delight to such work, and how understandable that some should lapse into unqualified panegyrics. In an age when so many take advantage of the fashion of obscurity and unmusical jig-jags to set themselves up as poets (and who can accuse the poet of emptiness and lack of euphony when he does not aspire, apparently, to anything more?), it is difficult not to receive such rare witness that the true spirit of poetry is still alive, with rather unbalanced shouts of praise.

Too few poets are left who can convey their horror of the present world-picture in a vein in which bitterness is replaced by sensitive, infinite regret and understanding, and in words that do not share the harsh, discordant note of everyday life and thought. Such a poet, fortunately for us, we have in Walter de la Mare, and the miracle will not easily be forgotten.

JON WYNNE-TYSON.

Chaucer the Maker by John Speirs (Faber, 12s. 6d.).
The Pleasures of Poverty, An Argument and an Anthology, by Anthony Bertram (Hollis & Carter, 15s.).
Selected Poems of Thomas Merton. Introduced by Robert Speaight (Hollis & Carter, 12s. 6d.).

The unifying links between these books are first the values of Catholic Christianity which form an accepted standard for the subject of the first, the editor of the second, and the author of the third; and secondly, Mr. Bertram's title which would be readily understood by the other two—"pleasures" which have in fact been voluntarily embraced by Thomas Merton as a monk of the Carthusian Order.

That voluntary embracement of poverty—"holy poverty" as Mr. Bertram calls it— is the peak up to which his anthology leads; but the willing acceptance and turning to peace of mind and spiritual account of that poverty forced upon us by hap or circumstance is a no less important feature of the book. In extracts in prose and verse, culled from his readings in English, French, and Latin translations, Mr. Bertram has built up a consecutive theme so that his book can be read as a whole and not merely dipped into in the manner of the usual anthology.

It is divided into three parts and many sub-sections. Those of the first and longest part, "The Imperfect Paradise", deal with the earthly delights and consolations of a poverty that is never destitution but a humble sufficiency; the second part deals with wealth as "The Bane of Bliss"; and the third with "The Long Reward" of those who have patiently suffered or joyfully embraced the Lady Poverty: inevitably its key figure is St. Francis of Assisi. It is a wholesome and heartening compilation, garnered with loving care, and a very present spiritual help to many who are today being gathered into the Lady's ranks whether they will or no.

From among her voluntary servants comes the voice of Thomas Merton's *Selected Poems*. Some of these date from his secular days and are on Classical themes, on war subjects or quotidian experience; but for the most—and best—part they are the fruit of his vocation as a Carthusian. They are interior in a double sense: subjective explorations of the mystic way—explorations which, from the very nature of mystical experience, cannot be wholly articulate; and, written from the interior of the cloister, they sometimes, as Robert Speaight confesses in his sensitive Foreword, too angrily reject the world, or speak in accents a shade too Biblical. But Merton's stature perceptibly increases with the later poems, where feeling and intellect are happily wed. This is still a volume of promise rather than achievement, but the promise is, nevertheless, considerable; its appeal is essentially to those who have already travelled some distance along the author's road: they will derive much solace and delight from this poet of *Elected Silence,* as he titles his recent autobiography.

Mr. Speirs pays full tribute to the mediæval Christian order lying at the back of all that Chaucer wrote—an order with the enormous advantage lacking to a modern writer of being universally valid for poet and audience alike. Chaucer's caustic quips at clerical abuses partake of the nature of Aristophanes' jibes at the Gods: they are made by a believer to those inside the fold. But while Mr. Speirs unquestioningly accepts Chaucer's identification with his age, he too lightly esteems the efforts of the scholars who alone have made a proper understanding of that age possible. The result is that in his admirable, close analysis of the text of the poems he often misses allusions, and even examples of that delicious irony of Chaucer's that he elsewhere so justly praises. This disparagement of "mere scholarship" causes him also to underestimate the poet's indebtedness to do the French and Italian, and correspondingly to overrate his "English" originality. Yet, with these reservations, his book is an eminently readable and exhilerating exploration of Chaucer's work; indeed one of the most vital and arresting introductions to Chaucer which a student can hope to encounter.

HERMANN PESCHMANN

Australian Poetry 1949-50. Selected by Rosemary Dobson. (Angus and Robertson, Castlereagh St., Sydney, N.S.W.; 48, Bloomsbury St., London), 1950, 7s. 6d.

In Sydney, Angus and Robertson have an excellent series which might well be imitated by some English publisher. Each year they produce a small anthology of verse and, to avoid the risk of the series becoming stale or of its falling into the hands of a clique, the contents for each volume are selected by a different editor, the current one having been gathered by Rosemary Dobson, some of whose work has appeared in *The Poetry Review*. Wide has she cast her net: one feels almost too widely. In her anxiety not to miss the smallest fish, she has gathered many poets that none might feel neglected. The important ones are all here with two exceptions, Hugh McCrae and Kenneth Slessor, and one may be assured that their absence is not Miss Dobson's fault. They could have had no work at hand to offer her.

To those with any knowledge of Australian poetry the list of contributors alone will send them to this anthology. Here, amongst others, will be found poems by David Campbell, Elizabeth Riddell, Kenneth Mackenzie, Judith Wright, Francis Webb, Mary Gilmore, W. Hart-Smith, Peter Hopegood, Harold Stewart, James McAuley, Robert D. FitzGerald, Douglas Stewart, and Rosemary Dobson herself contributing a poem which, I am proud to say, was written in my home during her recent visit to England.

Amongst such richness it is difficult to choose but most highly do I place Miss Dobson's dream of how the sulphur-creasted white cockatoo reached

England long before Australia had been discovered, as it is shown in Verelst's portrait of the daughter of the fifth Duke of Bedford painted in the mid-seventeenth century; Judith Wright's passionate cry from the grave at *The Fire at Murdering Hut;* Elizabeth Riddell's fretful longings while *Wakeful in the Township;* Francis Webb's frightening portrait of the bushranger *Morgan's Country;* Peter Hopegood's merry skipping and panting in *Ducdame;* the two of Fitzgerald's which both deal with memories of youth and with courage for the future; and lastly—only because it is last in the book—Douglas Stewart's swashbuckling sea-pioneers in *Terra Australis.*

But I must shut the covers lest the temptation to quote becomes irresistible, while I strongly urge those interested in poetry to beg, borrow or—as a desperate resource—even to buy this little book.

PHILIP LINDSAY.

Involuntary Witness, Poems by Joseph Warren Beach (Macmillan, New York, $1.50.)
Trial of the Masks, by Gene Magner (Bern Porter, California, 1950.)
Private Speech, poetry by Philip Freund (W. H. Allen, 10s. 6d.)

It is characteristic of modern pretentiousness, in Europe no less than America, to use titles which convey no clear meaning, and two of the three here fall into this preciosity. One of the more consternating tricks of the game is to use as a title the name of a single poem. *Involuntary Witness* occurs on page eighty-six of the volume so named, and it may be that its last verse is meant to represent the author's warm if unpoetical interest in human beings:

> One mercy is the darkness here
> Making it doubtful if the ignominy
> Is being witness to their suffering
> Or to their nakedness accessory.

But it seems doubtful if this justifies the title for the book. Even Doctor Warren Beach's spelling keeps slipping, "sterterously" he breathes in anxiety over Phyllis late, and "through wards of kenelled misery" in the title poem.

Here too is Culture almost with a capital K, "O draw Thick curtains, open the Misanthrope, or take A stiff shot of Aurelius, and be still!" I decline to judge of U.S. Poetry by this; it is interesting *rapportage.*

In *Trial of the Masks* by Gene Magner, I can find no poetry; no "images" even save in baldest, unwigged, unfrocked, prose; and would say no more than that it is very beautifully printed on lovely paper.

It is sheer joy to turn from this in which (rightly) I find nothing, however hard I search, to the friendly pages of Mr. Philip Freund, in whom I find everything, all the way, all his three-hundred and sixty-odd

pages, without having to search at all. I turn everywhere and find poetry, vivid, imaginative, colourful; I select what suits my mood but see nothing which I reject. How different with most of the works I find amid dust-covers and blurb. Mr. Freund appears to be well known as a prolific young novelist and critic, but has kept poetry as his "private language" until now. How lucky are we, now!

I thought the beginning of "To a Boy" typical of what I found in him:

> Allow me, dreamer, I have words that must be spoken—
> A prophetic moment comes to every man . . .
> O words most wonderful, the bidden visitants
> Of silence broken;
> Some are like red hawks soaring, some like the rattling kingfisher
> Chase their prey in the quick rivers—
> Hawks and silver-winged gulls in the mind!
> Poets, the men of vision,
> Sharp voices crying, an assigned
> Unearthly token:
> Dreamer, allow me—I have words.
>
> Theocritus, on the blue hills, wandered aimless
> Singing his great love of streams and valleys,
> His sweet love of love;
> Blake, an eagle . . .

and so on; unpredictable, and poetry.

ARTHUR VIVIAN.

THE TALIESIN P.M.G.

POETRY AND MUSIC GROUP

Friends' House (Room 7), Euston Road, N.W.1.

(Alternate Tuesdays at 6-20 p.m.)

Poetry — Ross Nichols

Music — Mary Field

Readers of *The Poetry Review* will be interested in the recent foundation of this new Poetry and Music Group, which proposes to feature, among others, work by such well-known contributors as V. Sackville-West, C.H., T. W. Ramsey, John Heath-Stubbs and James Kirkup. The inaugural meetings on March 6th and March 20th have already been graced by the appearance of Mr. Clifford Dyment, Mr. Iain Fletcher and Miss Nancy Price. The Secretary is Mr. Ronald Westbrook, 4 Meadow Crescent, New Hythe, Maidstone, Kent.

SHAKESPEARIAN EMENDATIONS

By HOWARD PARSONS

Hamlet No. I

1,1,70. Marcellus asks—

> Good now sit downe, & tell me he that knowes
> Why this same strict and most observant Watch,
> *So* nightly toyles the subject of the Land,
> And why such dayly Cast of Brazon Cannon
> And Forraigne Mart for Implements of warre:
> Why such impresse of Shipwrights, whose sore Taske
> Do's not divide the Sunday from the weeke,
> What might be toward, that this sweaty hast
> Doth make the Night joynt-Labourer with the day:
> Who is't that can informe me?

"The subject of the land" means *the people,* as in *Measure for Measure,* III,2,145, "the greater file of the subject held the duke to be wise". In order that the third line shall form the continuation of the second line, in each of my eight editions, the comma the *Folio* supplies at the end of the second line is omitted. But so far as this combination provides any meaning, it is that all the people toil nightly on the "most observant watch", whereas it is made clear in the opening lines of the play that special sentries had been appointed; moreover, sentry duty is not "toil" for it entails much standing still, while the ship-wrights (and doubtlessly other tradesmen) worked with "sweaty haste". From lines 11/12, it appears "most observant watch" refers to the men on duty. A small emendation makes all plain—

> Good now, sit down and tell me, he that knows,
> Why this same strict and most observant watch?
> *Why,* nightly, toils the subject of the land?
> And why such daily cast of brazen cannon
> And foreign mart for implements of war?

Note the antithesis "nightly" and "daily" in the third and fourth lines. It shews those two lines are a pair, and that the second and third are not. There is the same contrast in the penultimate line "Doth make the *night* joint-labourer with the *day:*" The enquiry regarding that line shews it to be a repetition of "*Why* nightly toils the subject of the land?"

1,1,117. Horatio says apparitions were seen in Rome just before "the mightiest Julius fell"—

> And even the like *precurse* of fierce *events,*
> As *harbingers* preceding still the *fates*
> And *prologue* to the omen *coming on,*
> Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
> Unto our climatures and countrymen.

"Demonstrated" means demonstrated in former years. In an endeavour

to make sense of the second and third lines, Schmidt (like many editors of the plays) defines "omen" as "a fatal event portended by signs", but he gets no backing from the *New English* and other dictionaries, for therein it is defined merely as the portent. *Precurse, harbingers* and *prologue* are all synonyms, and *fates* and *coming on* (compare the slang term *goings-on*) variants of *fierce events,* so the second and third lines are paraphrases of the first line. It is very improbable that Shakespeare would thus have said the same thing three times over, so, probably, the passage is very corrupt. The five lines quoted form part of a passage of eighteen lines that are in the *Quarto* but not in the *Folio*: had they appeared in the latter, they would probably have been corrected.

Shakespeare never used the word "omen", and in this passage it is redundant, as it follows its synonym "prologue"; for these reasons, it should be removed, but metre makes it certain there was another word in the place it occupies in the *Folio,* and no doubt that word was *evil;* each word consisting of four letters facilitating the error. So the line should read

> And prologue to the evil coming on,
> 1,2,129. Hamlet starts the first of his soliloquies—
> Oh that this too too *solid* Flesh, would melt,
> Thaw, and resolve it selfe into a Dew.

He then proceeds to condemn his mother's re-marrying less than two months after his father's death.

Marshall (the Irving editor), Verity and Professor Dover Wilson all mention the Quarto's spelling of "solid" as "sallied". Marshall says the *Folio* "solid" is right: Verity that *sallied* is corrupt: Professor Dover Wilson–

> "sullied flesh" is the key to the soliloquy—Further, "sullied" fits the immediate context as "solid" does not. There is something absurd in associating "solid flesh" with "melt" and "thaw"—and the surface Hamlet obviously has in mind here is snow, symbolical of the nature he shares with his mother, once pure but now befouled.

But in the lines quoted, there is no thought of the queen: they are concerned with the idea that life is not worth living: they proclaim a generality, and Hamlet followed it up in succeeding lines by giving a particular instance of "the uses" (doings) that have led him to his conclusion, viz., his mother's *over-hasty* re-marriage. He did not express the view that his own flesh could be "sullied" by his mother's re-marriage, in fact, he denies, in effect, "the nature he shares with his mother" by saying (IV,4,55) he has "a mother stained".

Accepting "solid" as authentic, the wish set forth in the first two lines is that he might be annihilated; passing through liquefaction to invisible moisture. Only a solid can melt or thaw, and it was a solid that Hamlet had in mind, for a "surface" cannot do either, as it has no substance: I suggest it may be defined as a *boundary.* Although "sullied" has interesting points as presented by Professor Dover Wilson, I have shewn that the other editors were right to follow the *Folio.*

Poetry

PRAYER OF THE BRETON FISHERMAN

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

This boat of mine, oh Lord, is how so small;
This sail, oh master, scarce your winds can hold.
Weak are my arms to trim, to tack, to haul
Before grim waves that bludgeon, then to enfold.
These eyes of mine, oh Lord, cannot discern
Cliff, dune or harbour over high flung seas;
The angered skies deny my sure return
To cottage waiting by the sea-girt leas.
Your mercy, Lord, is kind and how so great,
To my inconsequence made manifest;
So for your servant may your winds abate;
Send home his boat to safe and certain rest.
As small my soul before the raging tide;
Your mercy, as your ocean, Lord, is wide.

FUGIT AMOR

IAN BEITH

This desert haunted by your eyes,
Where longed-for mirages waylay
The trespasser on shifting sand,
Might teach me, loving, to despise
That secret smile I understand.
Yet my surrender is to say:
Loving is leaving, is the spell
The first kiss fears as a farewell.

THE BALLAD OF APPLE JANE

IRIS BIRTWISTLE

This piteous apparition
A-chatter in the lane
Was once the village lovely
That they called Apple Jane.
Her pumpkin cheeks were riper
Than any fruit tree's pride,
And many a dreamy youth
Looked to a mellow bride.

Her mind now roams unfettered,
It soars among the birds;
And only doe-eyed children
Can translate broken words.
She gathers slender tendrils
To lattice falling hair;
As colder bind the seasons
Numbed limbs dance unaware.

The Summer finds her muffled
In folds of scarecrow coat,
Through Winter she runs rawfoot
With web-wisps at her throat.
She scours the stream for pennies
Among the waters cold,
And counts the mallow petals
As misers check their gold.

She is the patient mid-wife
At every wild thing's birth;
Her kingdoms are unnumbered,
Her larder is the earth.
She scorns a hovel-shelter
And sleeps against the sky.
She neither fears the living
Nor is afraid to die.

SOUVENIR

MARJORIE BOULTON

I broke her heart. I struck her blind.
I never willed it. This was fate.
And now I know with strange delight
I broke her heart but not her mind
And her unbreakable mind of late
Now builds in stone to such a height
Unscaled, that now the shadow's length
Is all men have to calculate
This monument that speaks my strength,
And all the mind and art are mine
And all this permanent symmetry
And thus she builds a pyramid

Over my mortal memory,
A prism of sharp and powerful line
Built by her groping, broken hands,
All for my honour standing high on
Horizons where a burning lid
Covers the enigmatic lion
And dries the sliding tawny sands.

SOMETIMES A WORD

R. L. COOK

Into the mirror of a pool,
  Static in Autumn, deep and black,
A stone falls, cracks the glass and sinks
  To a forgotten resting-place:
The mirror forms again; the ripples die.

And music often, like a flower in space,
  Fading into an empty room,
Leaves unseen shadows everywhere
  Before the deaf walls crush the bloom,
Assert their permanence, absorb the sound.

Sometimes a word, a look, a sign,
  Falling upon the guarded mind,
Echoes like music or a stone,
  Ruffling the troubled consciousness
And twisting the frail tendrils of the heart.

QUE FAIRE?

YORKE CROMPTON

How can I serve, at one conjunctive minute,
  My conscience and the world, that I may live
  To bind the foison that my pen may give?
How can I match the tremble-throated linnet
  When only parrot-calls prove lucrative?
  For value fritters through a twisted sieve—
The clod may settle snugly dull within it;
  And nephews gloze the pouchy relative,
  Whose sins they must—whose health they can't—forgive.

EPITAPH

MARY DICKINSON

Say—"This was a vessel steered without a compass,
This was a house built on a drifting sand.
This was a lamp that flickered in the darkness,
This was a reed shaken by every wind.

This was a hand that held the plough and faltered—
An arm that flinched ere ever it had striven;"
All this. But of your charity say after
"This was a heart that loved, and was forgiven."

A FACE

OWEN HAMILTON

No dazzling brilliance there,
Nor great imagination,
Nor even feminine charm—
Born of that gay carefree
Insouciance
Of Eve we see,

But in her pale frail face
Under its whitening coils
And in her pitying eyes,
That seemed to see from soul,
I saw the Christ—
I saw Him whole.

AESTAS MORTUA

A. HOSSACK

I'll have you know,
Irreverent Hearer,
That I was king
In another era
But there was insurrection
By consular faction

And disaffection
Causing contraction
Strangling
My universe.

Yet I do not wish
To be reinstated:
My insignia's lost,
My purple dated
And my wavering decision
Cannot withstand
The salon's derision
For resurgence planned
Lingering
On alien soil.

My people's soul
Shall find salvation
In the usual way
—By propagation
Of other idolatry—
Eternal replacement.
And I, desultory
In furtive basement,
Fingering
Dull relics.

SPELL

F. A. KENNEDY

If I could kiss you would the spell be broken?—
If I could put my arms about you, take
Time by the tail and toss him for a token
To those still short of ecstasy, and break
Like spiderthreads conventions and moralities:
Take you and kiss you, kiss you, kiss you hard,
Till earth was lost and space and all realities,
Kiss you and crush you till the day was starred . . .

Would, like a sudden wash of foam subsiding,
Longing drain from me, and the trusted things
Return to their ancient, to their lost abiding;

And your strange beauty on contented wings
Rise from my brain as if from sleep awoken:
If I could kiss you, would the spell be broken?

CINEMA

W. McDERMOTT

Moulded in white, the cinema
Sped gracefully upwards,
Scattering the houses to dullness,
And the shops, and the wet streets.
Red and green were the neons
That startled in the sky,
Diffusing a glow of friendship
And warmth to the watchers.
Brilliant with light, the foyer
Crowded to the front,
Exhibiting its wares, and samples
Sat framed on the wall.
Patient with time stood the queue,
Yet restless in talk and eye
For the moment of movement,
When they would escape from themselves.

PUBLIC OPINION

VICTOR MUSGRAVE

Hard and soft,
Coracle crib or a billowy bed;
Whisper me which you choose,
But the world shall know and whistle at what you said.

Cold and warm,
Narrow nights or a woman wise;
Whisper me which you choose,
But the world shall know if you steal your love with lies.

Black and white,
Deaf despair or a diamond dream;
Whisper me which you choose,
But the world shall know you cannot be what you seem.

OBITUARY

With profound regret we record the irreplaceable loss of the Hon. Librarian of The Poetry Society and Hampstead Centre Representative to The General Council,

HENRY KEITH GRANT

An enthusiast for the best in verse, an erudite bibliographer, an authority on Scottish poetry, particularly on Burns (See *Poetry Review,* February–March, 1949, pages 69–71), he long and loyally served the Society and his Centre, and is mourned deeply by all who had the honour of knowing him.

The following "affectionate epitaph" has been received from his fellow member of The General Council, Leigh Henry:

GRANT, LORD, SUCH GRACE

Much did he grant,
Being more than Grant in name,
By gentle care, to cherish,
Not his, but others', fame.
Preserving poets' Springtide
In his own Winter's season;
Bright-patterned volumes ranging
Shewed rhyme his very reason.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A DEVOTED SERVANT OF POETRY

Sir,

The death has occured suddenly in London (his body was cremated on Monday, March 5th, at Golders Green) of Henry Keith Grant, an original member of The Poetry Society and actively associated with its first Centre (Hampstead) from its formation in 1909, and latterly a representative of this faithful group on the General Council of the Society. Since his retirement from the Foreign Securities Department of the Customs and Excise, for which he was particularly fitted by his wide linguistic skill, Mr. Grant has acted as honorary librarian of The Poetry Society, finding an outlet for his life-long bookishness and devotion to poetry in classifying and cataloguing and administering the use of the extensive accumulation of volumes at 33 Portman Square. With quiet enthusiasm and great assiduity he devoted himself to the many claims of his congenial duties for which he had received early training as librarian of the Edinburgh Philosophical Society. For such as he the Poetry Society was constituted—in membership and service he found great pleasure, comfort, satisfaction and fellowship.

Henry Keith Grant was the son of David Grant, A.C.P., F.E.I.S., one time a master at Oundle and vice-principal of Eccelsall College, Sheffield, who is still remembered as "the Aberdeenshire poet", greatly admired by Lewis Spence and other leaders of the Scotch Renaissance. His *Lays and Legends of the North* have gone through many editions in many forms.

I am, etc.,

GALLOWAY KYLE.

JOHN DRINKWATER

Sir,

Possibly some personal recollection of John Drinkwater's early days may be of some interest to your readers.

It was in late October, 1903 that I first met him—just a week after we had returned from our honeymoon. My husband, who was Surveyor to an Insurance Company in Birmingham was sent to the Potteries to do a joint survey with the representative of another Company. Their Surveyor

was John Drinkwater. For years afterwards they recollected that journey with amusement, as they remembered little of the premises they had gone to see, because they had soon discovered that they were kindred spirits in their love of the Arts and of Literature.

The future poet was invited to visit us—our first visitor. He came; a tall, dark, aloof and somewhat arrogant young man, then about 22 years of age. That visit was the precursor of many, for there were few evenings afterwards that didn't find him in our home.

At that time, of course, he had never published a line of either poetry or prose, but I often heard him say to my husband, "Johnny, what I want is recognition."

Long into the night, and often into the early hours of the morning the two talked, discussed, argued and then commenced to collaborate in writing. One of the first plays they wrote, I remembered, was called *The Eve of Austerlitz,* but it was not destined to be seen by the public. The closing line alone remains in my memory, it was "My sword, Monsieur, I would it were at your service yonder." "Dee" as we called him always acted each part as it was written with great dramatic effect.

This was followed by a comedy, *The Pursuit of the Polyborus,* which suffered the same fate.

About this time the late Harry Tate was acting in his sketch *Motoring* and *Fishing*. This gave the two enthusiasts the idea for a sketch, the leading character being Holmlock Shears. After submitting it they were summoned to an interview with Mr. Tate's Manager. Through inexperience, when they were asked their price, they placed too high a value on their work, so it was handed back with thanks—a bitter disappointment to both of them.

Upon the first anniversary of our wedding day Drinkwater gave us a copy of Carlyle's *On Heroes and Hero Worship*—I have it now. On the flyleaf this verse is written:

> "Gleam in a sky that is oft-times grey
> Symbol of higher things to be,
> Stir of the dawn of eternal day
> Whisper of immortality."

Two years afterwards when he published a slim little book, *The Death of Leander and Other Poems,* he dedicated it to H.S.M. and J.E.N. The J.E.N. was my husband.

A short time after his marriage Drinkwater left Birmingham and although the friendship continued for a time we gradually drifted apart.

Besides various autographed copies of his books, I still have in my possession a photograph of a very callow youth taken in 1904, an unpublished verse in manuscript and a letter written in 1921, to remind me of some very happy days.

In conclusion I should like to quote one of his very early verses.

"A turn of the wheel and we see a face
We never have seen before.
A turn again and away through the race
Perchance we shall see it no more.
But when heart strikes heart
And the tone beats true
Though the sound but a moment may last,
The echo remains for a whole life through
To remind us of days that are past."

I am, etc.,

IDA F. NEWARK.

Sir,

As I had expected, Mr. Peter Russell chose to justify his remarks rather than recant. I find he is still obsessed with the poem, *The Critic,* which is only one of the fifty or so in my book, *Wind on the Heath.*

Of course, we are all entitled to our own opinions, and by a coincidence, Mr. Herbert Palmer's letter in the same issue is very enlightening on that subject. But is it not a fact that brick-bats hurled at unoffending and helpless victims often have an uncomfortable habit of returning as boomerangs? The gift of courtesy is quite another matter. I am not a professional critic, but I am a severe critic of my own poems and never allow one to appear in print unless I consider it perfect in workmanship. The actual poem—its inspiration, its elusiveness suddenly caught and changed into comprehensible language, its message—cannot be discussed in a short letter. As a friend of mine said recently, "Harsh raucous voices are now shouting down the sweet singers, whose sensitivity is attuned to the deeper vibrations of the universe".

The slovenliness, absence of style, lack of meaning and flagrant flouting (or ignorance) of the elementary rules of grammar and prosody shown in many of the published present-day poems is deplorable.

I am proud to claim a famous eighteenth-century poet and critic as an ancestor, and I feel I share his meticulous insistence on "pure poetry".

Mr. Russell and I would undoubtedly give entirely different definitions of the word "poetry". Shall we leave it at that?

I remain, etc.,

EDITHA M. KELLY.

Sir,

I trust you will allow me to comment briefly on Mr. William Kean Seymour's notice of my introduction to Dr. Sitwell's *Façade, and Other Poems*. He concentrates entirely on some preliminary remarks of mine about the Victorian poets. Now, I am not quite so stupid as to suggest that Tennyson, Browning, etc., wrote nothing of value and if I were writing at length about them, I should seek to distinguish their many virtues from their vices or weaknesses. But what I am saying in my Introduction is something different—that after Keats and Shelley there is a confused period (brought to its head perhaps by Beddoes and Alexander Smith) in which the potentialities of our great Romantic Movement are grasped at but finally let slip. The following poets, from Tennyson to (say) de la Mare, write many charming or even powerful poems, which our language will not easily let die; but they have ceased to grapple with the innermost struggle of man, the deepest levels of the human condition.

This is what I call the betrayal of Romanticism; and I fail to see how anyone who has truly apprehended the great struggle and resolution of poetic and human elements in our poets from Blake and Coleridge to Shelley and Keats, could fail to grasp what is meant by my generalisations. One has again only to glance at the French development from Baudelaire into Rimbaud, Verhaeren, Apollinaire, Tzara and Eluard, to realise that these poets are carrying on with that fundamental struggle of integration in a way qualitatively different from anything of the post-1850 poets in Britain—until we come to Yeats and Dr. Sitwell.

Hence what seems a paradox to Mr. Seymour, that Dr. Sitwell's understanding of Baudelaire and Rimbaud, is one aspect of her rediscovery of the true English tradition; for those poets carry on integrally and richly from the bases of Blake, Coleridge, and the others. I do not speak of direct influences, though Baudelaire drew importantly on English romanticism, mainly through Poe (and various lesser writers), but of a fullness and directness of relation to the total historical process, the vast convulsion of human change which began in European society during the eighteenth century, centred at first in England and finding its first basic expression through Thomson, Savage, Young, Smart and Macpherson.

My call for a revaluation of the Victorians, for an understanding of their "betrayal" of the creative struggle of Romanticism (which passes into Symbolism), was not then meant as a simple rejection. Rather it was meant as the essential first step to the rediscovery of something vital in our national tradition which was obscured and killed-off by the post-1850 development—something of which Dickens was the last great exponent. After having made the crucial step of breaking from the falsification,

one can then afford to return to the Tennysons, etc. and appreciate what is good in their work.

I am sorry that Mr. Seymour dealt only with my preliminaries, which I am aware are easily misunderstood; for it was in the concrete application of those comments to Dr. Sitwell's poetry and its great contribution that my point could have been grasped. I think that in a magazine such as *The Poetry Review* a discussion of my remarks on what Dr. Sitwell has achieved in rhythm and in image would be more relevant than the citation of parodies, even if they were better than that given.

I remain, etc.,

JACK LINDSAY.

Sir,

In Mr. Randall Swingler's review of the *Anthology for Verse Speakers* compiled by E. Guy Pertwee, I note with great interest that Herbert Palmer (in his introduction) claims that "if a poem fails the oral test it fails to justify its existence and is no poem at all." With this I am inclined to agree, and I believe that a general recognition of this among poets would sweep away the wide-spread distortions of cacophonous verse-writing and rescue many now hopelessly lost in their wanderings in unsatisfactory and bewildering fields. It may well be that the verse-vocalist is the only one who can save poetry—through *its oral test;* but I myself would prefer the *aural* test:—to be performed by the poet himself with painstaking and inspiring care during the poem's composition.

I am, etc.,

ARTHUR ROW.

Sir,

By some regrettable oversight when publishing my *Harold Monro and The Poetry Review,* acknowledgement was not made to the editors and proprietors of *The New Mexico Quarterly Review* who first published it in this country.*

I am, etc.,

U.S.A. MARVIN MAGALANER.

* *The Poetry Review* apologises for this quite unintentional discourtesy—Ed.

PREMIUM COMPETITION REPORT

(New Series: No. 5)

Out of a much larger field of entries than usual, I award the prize for the Competition which closed on February 15th, 1951, to Miss Rosamund Greenwood for her singularly haunting lyric, *The Gift*. Five pieces ran it close in poetic value; namely, Mr. Blundell's succinct *Recorded Music*, Miss Erica May Brooks' elegiac poem to her compatriot Edna St. Vincent Millay, *Requiem in Sun and Rain*, Miss Anne Brown's graphic *The Salvationist*, Mr. Crompton's chiselled *Revelation* and Mrs. Brail Mills' mellifluous sonnet *The Nightingale Replies*. The general standard attained by the entrants was refreshingly high.

JOHN GAWSWORTH.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

G. J. Blundell, Kent.
Erica May Brooks, Albany, N.Y.
Anne F. Brown, W.1.
Yorke Crompton, W.C.1.
Brail Mills, Walton.

COMMENDED

Grace Angelo, Hitchin.
Phillippa Berlyn, S. Rhodesia.
Lucy Carter Bredin, Bath.
N. E. Buttress, S. Rhodesia.
Isobel Cumming, Birmingham.
N. Sheppard Fidler, Sussex.
Charmian Forsyth, Surrey.
Edith Roseveare, S.W.16.

THE GIFT

I sent my love a little bird,
And sweetly, sweetly did it sing:
It gave him joy and only asked
His cherishing.

He took it from its wooden perch,
And opened wide its tiny beak,
And looked and looked with burning eyes:
It suffered, meek.

And then at last he understood
What made the cheerful roundelay.
He was content, but in his hand
A dead bird lay.

ROSAMUND GREENWOOD.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE POETRY SOCIETY : ANNUAL GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Annual General Business Meeting of the Poetry Society (Incorporated) will be held at the offices of the Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. on Wednesday, May 30th, 1951 at 3-0 p.m., to receive the annual financial statement, and elect the general members of the General Council. Names of delegates representing Centres should be sent to the General Secretary not later than April 12th together with names of the Centre representatives on the General Council.

Admission will be made upon production of membership cards.

Any member who wishes to bring any business before the Annual Meeting must give twenty-eight days' written notice thereof to the General Secretary. Nominations for membership to the General Council must be made by two members of the General Council or three unattached members twenty-eight days prior to the Meeting.

Any member wishing to inspect the audited Statement of Accounts before the General Business Meeting may do so at this office between the hours of 10 a.m and 5 p.m. (Saturdays excepted), or may have a copy sent on application enclosing a stamped addressed envelope after April 30th.

—By Order of the Council.

THE POETRY SOCIETY: FRIDAY READINGS

The new year opened with a reading of Twentieth Century Lyrics by our own Gold Medallists, (eight in all), led and arranged by Miss Mollie Hudson on the 19th of January, and each of these readers gave better performance and deeper feeling and variety than the bulk of our usual star-thought elocutionary visitors. It was a performance of extraordinary width and variety. Choice may seem invidious but Doreen Wiswall, (one of two all the way from Liverpool) deserved especial praise, and almost as perfect were Valerie Houchin and our well-known Renée Cohen; while Miss Hudson herself, at the President's instance, gave admirable reading from the Laureate, as otherwise unrepresented. Our own poets made a brave show—highest I unquestioningly rate Redwood Anderson and Weston Ramsey, while Kean Seymour and Roberta Shuttleworth provoked thought. It is to be hoped that this exposition of our own best products will be continued and increased.

On January 25th we had excellent reading by Mr. John Holgate of interestingly chosen material, from the almost hackneyed yet still valuable *Village Blacksmith* and *Burial of Sir John Moore, Spanish Cloister* and Herbert, *via* the suitable transition of Dyment's *This is not my country* to Beach-Thomas, Bridges, delicious James Reeves for children, and subtle selections from Betjeman.

Friday the 2nd February as Candlemas, the Purification of the Virgin, our valued Mr. Wilton Cole pointed out, was most suitable for consideration of that most quintessential of forms the Sonnet. A lovely reading, ably aided by Miss Kathleen Penny from Wyatt, Sidney and Daniel *via* six perfect Shakespeare to Drummond of Hawthornden, Milton and Keats, to Wordsworth (including his Stilton Cheese parody), to the Brownings —Elizabeth's not-so-gifted "from the Portuguese" and Robert's sole two ; Hopkins, Douglas, Masefield, Blunt, Lady Margaret Sackville, and Baring on Sarah Bernhardt as *Phèdre*, a lovely selection. Miss Penny then gave her own choice, Helen Gray Cone's *The Common Street* and Jan Struther's *Blunder:* and we ended with Whitby's *Kingcraft* from a recent *Poetry Review* and Shakespeare's "When in disgust . . " The vote of thanks was moved by Mr. Armstrong.

The 9th February, brought us a period piece indeed. Tennyson at his most sentimental and Miss Dorothy Dayus with skilled modulations reading him as he wanted to be read as we have heard his own voice read himself, from records brought by Sir Charles Tennyson, who chose this programme, but was not present . The *Lady Clare*, rescued from bathos nowadays only by the superb diction, *Sailor Boy, Sisters*, and the *Lady of Shallott*. Less known were, with their somewhat dated sentiment, *The Victim* and *Rizpah* and some superb *In Memoriam* the Wild Bells indeed calling for even more voice). Thanks were moved by Mr. Foley ("To make a nation forget, teach it to write!"), who presented a grand-daughter of the poet and said that no Festival would be complete without Tennyson; whose *Ulysses* was aptly quoted by Winston Churchill. Mr. Kidd then cited his favourite Tennyson lines, and there was some discussion.

February 16th. brought us Mr. Foley's Oscar Wilde; his admirable team excelling even their poetry-reading by the subdued drama of their reading the Cloak-Room scene and the Stolen Letter. etc., from the *Importance* and the *Ideal*, and these were followed by three extracts from *De Profundis*. Tribute is due to the Misses Barnard and Thompson and Mr. Holmes.

From the back of the side room it was difficult to connect or place the extracts faded up in Mr. Clifford Turner's lovely fluctuant voice when he gave us his personal selection on February 23rd. This is a matter less of intensity than intention—we have heard thence a small woman's fading whisper . . . Shakespeare's "I had a daughter . . ." adorably audible, recalling Ainley in that room of old.

With *East Coker* we knew more where we were, the intemittent fading was less irritant. Could not a cheap "mike" and battery serve the side room? It came over paragraph by paragraph clear, yet not a whole.

The third part; "lighter to end with", gave us *Favourite Cat . . . Drowned*, Sassoon on *Richard III*, and Edith Sitwell's lovely *Solo for Ear Trumpet*.

The President thanked from the Chair, "unable adequately to comment on the glorious flow of sound"; and quoting Dante to this effect. In the discussion he added that Mr. Turner spoke the *East Coker* as if he were composing it; *i.e.*, with real understanding, if admirably paragraph-wise; and added later in comment on mention of "could'nt-careless" voices reading for the B.B.C., that this was in accordance with instructions—not to attach "meaning", for fear of causing offence.

The 2nd of March brought us Mr. Foley's team again, admirable at work on a programme of Welsh poetry. Vernon Watkins and Dylan Thomas came over as great poetry. Alun Lewis more dubiously. Mr. Llewellyn followed with a reading from his own work, from his *Otter* and *Satire* in *Punch*.

AVE.

THE POETRY SOCIETY: READINGS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The second of a monthly series of poetry readings intended to interest the younger generation in the appreciation and enjoyment of poetry was held at the headquarters of The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, W.1., on Saturday, January 27th, 1951.

AVE writes: "Mr. Foley brought his same team, Pam giving *Walrus and Carpenter Quangle-Wangle Hat* and Francis Thompson's *Evening;* Daphne *Tarantella, Owl and The Pussycat*, Sitwell's *Cabman*, by *Father William* up to Flecker's *Prologue;* while David was delightful with *Lord Lundy* and *Jumblies* via *Story of Jim* and *Humpty-Dumpty* to *Pied Piper* and Tennyson's *Ulysses*. It was warmly liked, the more so as being rather more mature and nearer the original intention."

THE POETRY SOCIETY: LECTURERS

It has been suggested at the General Executive Council to invite any persons interested and willing to become lecturers to communicate direct with the Secretary, The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, W.1.

CENTRES

THE BATH POETRY CLUB

Enquiries to:—James Angell Esq., Bedwyn, Westbury Avenue, Combe Down, Bath, Somerset.

This centre inaugurated on December 1st, 1950, has so far held two meetings; at the first twenty-six people attended, at the second twenty-eight. Amongst the members there are nine active poets and eight accomplished elocutionists. The first meeting was devoted to readings from members' original work, the second to readings ranging from Shakespeare to Eliot. The local press has proved most sympathetic and the B.B.C's. West of England programme, when including some of Mr. Angell's poetry on January 25th, handsomely announced his address, mentioning he had just started a Poetry Centre in Bath. He writes that this has given some "very welcome publicity."

THE BOSTON POETRY CENTRE

Meetings held monthly. Full details from: Miss Blanche J. Bigelow, 163 Eliot Street, Milton 87, Mass.

THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to the General Secretary and Treasurer: Mrs. T. Weston Ramsey, 89 Poplar Avenue, Hove.

Fixtures every third Saturday in the month at the Glenside Hotel, 65 Grand Parade, Brighton. Readings at 4-30 until 6 p.m., (and it is hoped to start a Children's Section from 3 p.m. until 4 p.m., previous to the Adult Meeting). Tudor Café attached. Refreshments if desired.

THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE CENTRE

May 12th at 2-45 p.m.	*Towns, cities and villages.* Mrs. Theodora Roscoe, Horn Hill Court, Chalfont St. Peter. Chalfont St. Giles 5. Bus 305a to its terminus.
June 2nd at 10-0 a.m.	Day Outing to Stratford-on-Avon for matinée at Shakespeare Memorial Theatre of *Henry IV*, Part 1. Coach starts opposite Public Library.
June 9th at 2-45 p.m.	*Rooms, houses and furniture.* Mrs. E. Heygate-Browne, Hillside, Flackwell Heath. Bus 25 to Green Dragon.

THE CHELSEA POETRY CIRCLE

(Affiliated to the Poetry Society. Formed 1946)

President: Dame Sybil Thorndike

Vice-President: Miss Margaret Rawlings

Informal readings are held each month in members' homes, and occasional public readings at the National Trust Museum, 3 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.3. Full patriculars from the *Hon. Secretary*, John E. Carroll, 5 Redesdale Street, S.W.3.

THE EALING POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—The Secretary, 3 Grafton Road, Ealing, W.13.

Meetings at:—Savernake School, Ashton Road, Haven Green, May 15th, 7-30 p.m.

THE FLORIDA POETRY CENTRES

(Formed 1946)

President General:
Marie Tello Phillips
6427 Darlington Rd.,
Pittsburgh 17, Pa., U.S.A.

Vice-President General:
Lillie Reed Zortman
230 Forest Ave., Ben Avon,
Pgh. 2, Pa., U.S.A.

State Presidents:

Connecticut: Lille Offen Reed.
Florida: Pearl Safford.
Indiana: Grace Porterfield Polk.
Kentucky: Ethel Koger.
Maine: Effie Lawrence Marshall.
Minnesota: Margarette Dickson.
Pennsylvania: Lillie Reed Zortman.
Tennessee: Polly McKibben.

THE GUILDFORD POETRY CENTRE

Details of meetings may be obtained from The Centre Secretary, Mrs. F. E. Coker, 20 Litchfield Way, Guildford, Surrey.

THE HAMPSTEAD POETRY CENTRE (1909)

Meetings are held on the first and third Thursdays in each month at 8—9-30 p.m., at 9 Wentworth Mansions, Keats Grove, N.W.3., and the following Programme has been arranged:

May 3	Anonymous Poems.
May 17	No Meeting.
June 7	Women Poets (including Charlotte and Emily Brönte).
June 21	Seaside and Countryside.

THE KENSINGTON CENTRE

President:
Miss Eileen Thorndike

Hon. Treasurer:
Mrs. Patricia Gregory,
22 Chepstow Villas, W.11.

Over thirty attended the second meeting on Tuesday evening (fixed as suiting most) the 5th December. Mr. Foley gave an admirable exposition of W. B. Yeats. Miss Elizabeth Belloc and Mr. Bernard Gutteridge read from their own poems, and Miss Sybil Thorndike Ewbank, the actress daughter of the Centre's patron, gave Joan of Arc's two main speeches as a tribute to Bernard Shaw. After a break for business and tea, members read their own choice, as usual for the second half, separating towards midnight.

For our President's reading from his own works on January 16th, the Hon. Mrs. Franklin, for many years a valued supporter of the Society, had made available her lovely salon in Porchester Terrace, though unfortunately ill abed herself. Nearly thirty were present and Miss Eileen Thorndike presided and was unanimously elected Hon. President. Mr. Weston Ramsey gave a dozen of his poems (breaking in the middle to bid the Founder, whom he described as the finest natural reader he knew, to read his dialogues *The Consolation of Lucifer*. He then read his admirable version of Dante's *Paradiso*, Canto XXXI. Miss Thorndike, moving the vote of thanks, welcomed the new Centre and praised the President for his beautifully simple reading, with no hint of a "poetry voice", and said that the important thing was that people should read and hear poetry read with sincerity and at natural pace—no matter how well or roughly.

At the fourth meeting, held in the Treasurer's home, the programme was given by Mr. Arthur Kidd, M.R.S.L., on *Patrick Chalmers and his Poetry*, and by Mr. John Graddon reading from his own verse.

THE LEWES POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to :—Mrs. Doris R. Richards, East Way, Ditchling, Sussex.

THE NORTHERN IRELAND POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—H. Haddock, 18 Ashley Gardens, Belfast.

THE NOTTINGHAM POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—Lake Aske, Esq., 281 Wilford Lane, Nottingham.

THE NOVA SCOTIA CENTRE

During the year 1950 nine regular monthly meetings and five Executive meetings have been held.

Our January meeting took place at the home of our President, Mrs. Gilbert Hart, where Mr. and Mrs. Hart welcomed us.

Early in the year the Centre experienced a great loss in the death of the late Honorary President, Sir Joseph Chisholm. During the February meeting two minutes silence was observed in his honour.

In March the eleventh anniversary was celebrated with a dinner at the Dresden Arms.

In April the Centre crossed the Harbour and was warmly welcomed at the Dartmouth Library by Mrs. G. F. Baker; in September it visited the home of Premier and Mrs. Angus L. MacDonald, Winwick, Marlborough Woods, when Dr. Burns Martin gave an outstanding talk on Wordsworth.

Plans for the 1951 *Chap Book* are well on the way and the latter months of 1950 have seen the Centre launched on another such project, *The Nova Scotia Book of Verse*, Volume 2.

THE REIGATE POETRY CENTRE

Details of Meetings may be obtained from the Centre Secretary, Mrs. M. A. Hicks, The Alton, Alma Road, Reigate.

THE ST. PETERSBURG (U.S.A.) CENTRE

(Formed 1946)

Members and potential members are invited to communicate with the President, Helen T. Douglas Robinson, 815 Jackson Street North, St. Petersburg, 6, Florida. The Centre seeks to promote production of the best in poetry.

THE SOUTHAMPTON POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—Miss Joy Brider, 9 Archers Road, Southampton.

THE STROUD CENTRE

For particulars of Membership, please apply to the Hon. Secretary of the Stroud Poetry Centre at Steanbridge, Slad, Nr. Stroud.

THE WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—Mrs. Elsie M. Gittens, 28 Oatlands Drive, Weybridge, Surrey.

A most successful meeting was held on March 8th, when John Gawsworth, F.R.S.L., editor of *The Poetry Review*, read from his *Collected Poems*. On April 5th, Vere Arnot (Mrs. William Law) read from her published poems to a most appreciative audience.

Will anyone able and willing to start a Centre in any part of the country please communicate with the Secretary, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1.

POETS' GROUP OF THE POETRY SOCIETY

This Group, dedicated to furthering the work of active Poets within the Society, gathers "to hear each other's work and discuss the spirit and substance of poetry." All interested in attending future meetings are invited to communicate with me at The Well House, Ewell, Surrey. LEIGH HENRY

POETS' GROUP OF THE POETRY SOCIETY

FIRST ANNUAL SURVEY

Meetings of the Poets' Group have taken place regularly; each second Wednesday of the month, since December, 1949. Spring and summer, these were at The Well House, Ewell. During winter, the Group met at 8E Portman Mansions, Baker Street, W.1, by courtesy of Mrs. Ayliffe. Attendances varied, averaging 8-12. Group membership now has a total of 22, all active poets who have published in book-form or in established periodicals.

Desiring to avoid passivity, in mere readings or "taking-in-each-other's-washing", group meetings have concentrated on discussions of poetic production and poetry in relation to current life and other arts; the spirit and substance of poetry; the possibilities of extending the appeal of poetry through allied media and by association with other arts.

The Hon. Philip Inman contributed much penetrative thought to the discussion of poetry and the cinema; and the writer was happy to supplement this by records and extracts from correspondence, covering his thirty years' friendship with Jean Cocteau. Robert Armstrong availed himself of the Group guest facilities, by twice escorting the charming lady responsible for B.B.C. Finnish broadcasts. From the Kalevala to contemporary verse, valuable views emerged; Yorke Crompton, also of the B.B.C., proving sensitively imaginative. Discussions of State subsidy for poetry and poets ranged comprehensively. W. J. Gardiner urged, visionedly and profoundly, the inviolability of individual freedom of spirit. John Graddon trenchantly surveyed the invitiating effects of official and pseudo-educational controls and supervisions over literature. George Whitehorn,

with admirable forthrightness, energetically attacked the debasement of poetry, and indeed, verse, by political diversions and subversions, deflecting it from its wider, humanly expressive functions. Particularly amusingly, he indicated how self-postulated "advance guards" nowadays tend to "announce noon at 3 in the afternoon". In supporting the view that such coteries too often have "a great future behind them", the writer also deplored the confusionism whereby a self-termed Left pretends that this term makes it *ipso facto* something ahead, whereas in the march of contemporary thought, it is more truly only very much "left" (behind).

On problems of poetry-printing and publication, Arthur Ley advanced experienced points, ably backed by his charming wife as guest. Economics in their effect on poetry, were illuminatingly presented by H. Townsend Mills, with the especial authority of his lectures and publications on economics. P. Elwin Wright, as guest, had arresting things to say of the impoverishment of poetry by propaganda such as "Basic English" and degeneration of philological knowledge in the use of words. Extracts from his forthcoming, graphic *Story of Language* gave this unusual point.

Poetry-drama inevitably had extensive consideration, particularly in view of the present theatre prominence of T. S. Eliot and Christopher Fry. The writer, advancing his belief in "poetry for the eye and ear", brought forward a detailed project for a poets' laboratory theatre sub-group. He offered experimental working facilities for this in his centuries-old Malt House at Ewell and, for presentation of masque, pastorals and garden plays, the gardens of his Well House. He maintained that, while contemporary poetry revealed many dramatic talents, some of these missed full effect through lack of practical theatre knowledge. Theatre being a distinct, independent medium, theatrecraft was important to the poetry-dramatist. He offered the suggested sub-group the collected data of his work in theatrecraft with Gordon Craig, Jacques Copeau, Stanislavski, Diaghileff and the "Teatro delle Piccole Maschere" (Italian marionettes, whose London seasons, 1927-28-29, he directed), for the sub-group researches, together with premises for poets to study stage dimensional and proscenium problems; lighting; scenic design and costumery, with the aid of model construction.

Arising out of discussions, original Group members' work has been read, for criticism, suggestion and discussion by the Group. This has included lyric poems by Mrs. Ayliffe; parts of a poetry-drama for music by Geraldine Kalka-Cash; poems reflecting the interplay of social group forces and personal consciousness, by H. T. Mills and Mrs. Mills (Elizabeth Berger). Doris Major, Margaret Martyn, Fanny Moore, Katherine V. Richardson and Mrs. Hobday contributed some striking illustrations to several fervid discussions on form and formality in poetry. In a forthcoming discussion of the child and poetry, contributions by Yorke Crompton and John Graddon are awaited.

Formally organized discussions on set topics are avoided by the Group. So are debates, where fundamentals are frequently obscured in making debate points. The Group aim is stimulative and informative discussion—much as the members of the historic Mermaid and Apollo Club might co-operate. Poetry, not personalities, forms the main Group focus. The Group is a free association of people devoted to poetry and its making, often with violently conflicting basic ideas and ideals. It is not a mutual admiration coterie. It offers no platform for personal vanity. It seeks, not to exhibit personal output, but to stimulate and expand personal creative impulses and conceptions by an essentially congenial—if frequently contentious—communion between individual active poets.

LEIGH HENRY

THE POETRY SOCIETY'S CRITICAL SERVICE

The Poetry Society has pleasure in announcing the continuance of its Critical Service for Members. Two poems only may be submitted for criticism, for a minimum fee of 5s. The charge for the criticism of each additional poem is 2s. It is particularly requested that all poems submitted should be typed and that a stamped addressed envelope be enclosed.

THE POETRY SOCIETY'S AUDITIONS AND EXAMINATIONS

The Poetry Society has conducted auditions and examinations in the art of verse-speaking for many years, and its success in this valuable cultural activity is attested by the fact that the number of schools and institutions in all parts of England which the Society examines, continually increases.

Junior preliminary examinations are available for the youngest children and these continue through various grades, up to the final test for adult students, for which the Society's gold medal is the final award for success.

General regulations governing these auditions may be obtained on application to The Registrar, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, with whom arrangements can be made for auditions for schools, colleges, or private individuals.

COMPETITIONS

THE GREENWOOD COMPETITIONS FOR 1951

The Poetry Society is empowered by the executors of the late Mrs. Julia Wickham Greenwood to offer the sum of £20 as the Shirley Carter Greenwood Prize for the best single poem in open competition.

Entries should be addressed "The Greenwood Prize", 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Only one poem may be submitted by any one competitor, the length not to exceed 250 lines; no previously published poem may be entered. The full name and address of the author must be given and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed if return of the poem is desired. If a nom-de-plume is adopted, name and address of sender must be given in a closed envelope bearing the pseudonym. The winning poem will be printed in *The Poetry Review* and may be reprinted at the discretion of the Editor, who may also reserve near winners for publication in *The Poetry Review*.

Closing date is 31st December, 1951.

THE PREMIUM COMPETITION

The above bi-monthly competition continues as before with the total entrance fees as prize money which may be won outright by a single competitor or may be divided at the discretion of the Premium Adjudicator. An entrance fee of 2s. 6d. will be charged, and a stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed if a receipt is desired. Competitors must observe the following rules:

1. One poem only may be entered by each competitor.
2. The poem must be typed and no stamped addressed envelope will be required unless a receipt is desired. (See Rule 3.)
3. Competitors must retain copies of their poems, as none can be returned.
4. Entries must be addressed "Premium Competition", *The Poetry Review*, 33 Portman Square, W.1.
5. Each poem must bear the author's name and address.
6. Entrants must be members of the Poetry Society or regular subscribers to *The Poetry Review*.
7. The winner of a full Premium or one who has shared the prize twice will not be eligible for re-entry for twelve months.
8. No previously published poem may be entered.

The closing date for the next Premium Competition will be 15th June, 1951.

THE HOWARD PARSONS' EPIGRAM COMPETITION: 1952

The Poetry Society is empowered by Mr. Howard Parsons, a long-standing member of the Society, to offer the following prizes, endowed by him for an Epigram Competition.

1st prize, 5 guineas; 2nd prize, 2 guineas; 3rd prize, 1 guinea. Entries which should not have been previously published should be marked "Epigram" and should not bear a stamped addressed envelope, as MSS. cannot be returned. They should be addressed to The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, to reach here not later than 1st March, 1952. The Society reserves the right to extend the closing date of the competition should none of the entries reach the required standard.

THE POETRY SOCIETY JUNIOR VERSE COMPETITION

The Poetry Society have pleasure in announcing the next annual Junior Verse Competition. Schools throughout the country are invited to co-operate in submitting the work of their pupils.

The Competition will be divided into two classes:

(*a*) Not more than one poem, previously unpublished, to be submitted by any one competitor, age up to thirteen years last birthday. There will be a book prize inscribed by the Poetry Society.

(*b*) Not more than one poem, previously unpublished, to be submitted by any one competitor, age from fourteen to seventeen years last birthday. There will be a book prize, inscribed by the Poetry Society and four additional prizes of one year's Membership to the Poetry Society.

The poem may be on any subject. Closing date, 30th June, 1951. Entries to be addressed to: The Junior Verse Competition, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Entries should bear the names and addresses of competitors and copies should be retained as these cannot be returned.

THE LORD ALFRED DOUGLAS SONNET COMPETITION FOR 1951

The Poetry Society has the pleasure of announcing the fourth Annual Competition in memory of Lord Alfred Douglas for a sonnet upon any subject. One of the two forms adopted by Lord Alfred Douglas in his sonnets, must be used; these are:

For the Octave — 1, 2, 2, 1; 1, 2, 2, 1.
For the Sextet — 3, 4, 5; 3, 4, 5 *or* 3, 4; 3, 4; 3, 4.

The prize of £10 may be divided at the discretion of the adjudicator; the winning poem or poems will be published with the award in *The Poetry Review*. Competitors must retain copies of their poems as these cannot be returned. The sonnets should bear a definite title and not merely marked "Sonnet". Not more than two sonnets may be submitted by each competitor by 30th June, 1951. Address "Sonnet Competition", The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Entries should bear names and addresses of competitors. No previously published poem may be entered.

THE POETRY SOCIETY

(Incorporated)

Every boy and girl under eighteen years of age is now entitled to become a Junior Member of the Poetry Society.

Every junior member will enjoy the privileges of an ordinary member but, instead of *The Poetry Review*, will receive each quarter, post free, a special magazine called *The Voice of Youth*.

The Voice of Youth will be the only magazine in the country addressed solely to all under eighteen, and devoted wholly to poetry. There will be special articles about the way poets write, the thrill of finding their meaning, how poetry grew from ballad songs, the ways in which poets of to-day are seeking to find new ways to express themselves, the adventure of selecting and manipulating words to create a poem, the way to use the human voice to convey the true inner meaning of poetry, and so on.

There will be competitions in every issue, the opportunity of getting one's special efforts criticised by experts. A part will always be devoted to printing the best that is written by the junior members themselves.

Books and gramophone records will be reviewed. Queries will be answered and an open correspondence column will be there for the readers to give their own views.

The Poetry Society is the largest fellowship of poetry lovers in the world and, for over forty years, has played a great part in maintaining the strength and purity of this our English heritage.

YOU have the opportunity of joining as a Junior Member.

You can do so quite easily by completing the form below.

I,.....Date of Birth.....
Name in Block Letters.

of .....

apply for membership of the Poetry Society as a Junior Member, and enclose 5s. being subscription for one year.

Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square.